The time lag involved between placing order for procurement and supply of stores ranges between 9 months and 2 months, depending upon the source through which the procurements made, *e.g.* through rate contract, ex-import, trade, public sector units or ordnance factories.

In case of procurement through ordnance factories, the lead time has been reduced from 24 months to 30 months.

Status of Military Nursing Service Officers

3391. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether members of Military Nursing Service are commissioned officers;

(b) if so, under what authority/order they are commissioned alongwith the details thereof;

(c) if not, why they are wearing the uniform with Rank Insignia of Army Commissioned Ranks like Lieutenants, Captains, Lt. Colonels etc.;

(d) whether MNS cadre is under the Army Act; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI KRISHNAM RAJU): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) to (c) Officers of the Military Nursing Service are commissioned under the authority of the Indian Military Nursing Service Ordinance 1943 (XXX of 1943).

(d) and (e) The MNS cadre is governed by Indian Military Nursing Service Ordinance 1943. Section 9 of the Ordinance provides that the Army Act 1950 shall, to such extent and subject to such adaptation and modifications as may be prescribed, apply to the officers of MNS. Under this provision, only some provisions of the Army Act 1950, relating to disciplinary matters are made applicable to the Military Nursing officers.

Army Level Talks with China

3392. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the outcome of the army level talks held with China;

(b) whether any steps have been taken to reduce tension on the Indo-China border; and